

## MAORI WOOD SCULPTURE: THE HUMAN HEAD AND FACE

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### ABSTRACT

A review of carvings of the human head and face, naturalistic and stylized, with seventy-six photographic illustrations arranged to demonstrate the variety and quality of art forms achieved by Maori *tohunga whakairo*, carving experts; a second part of fifty-seven line drawings arranged by locality considered as evidence in relation to art style-areas; a brief tentative conclusion as to Maori art sources and development.

Although contributed as 'in continuation' of the writer's series of studies on the separate elements and compositions in Maori wood-carving\*, this paper on the human head and face should obviously have been almost the first. The order of appearance, or lack of order, has been due to the availability from time to time of subject material and to slow progress in ascertaining provenance. The latter is still imperfect and may never be bettered for, as always with early acquisitions of Maori carvings, there are all too many with no record other than "New Zealand".

As a cursory survey of the illustrations will reveal, the natural form, although almost invariably sculptured with confident competence, and occasionally with the appearance of successful portraiture, had but a small share of the wood-carver's endeavour; stylization is dominant. A primary influence in this direction might have been the natural representation of ornament — of facial tattooing, (Plate 39) which, used as it was as an emphasis of facial expression, may well have become the design framework for the stylized mask.

The present paper comprises two sections. In the first, a study of art form illustrated by photographic plates, faces and masks are arranged in groups, not that the Maori would have thought of his art in this way. He did not see the elements of his many designs as set in order on shelves, to be taken down and fitted in to this or the other setting. Each form as it were arrived in his mind as the composition of his proposed *pare* or *waka huia* developed into what was true creative design. Whereupon, as we survey the whole field that fortunately is preserved, we observe not groups so much as continuous variation, of nuances in this direction and of detail in that, ranging from naturalism to stylization, from bare austerity to complex ornament. This however is not to suggest that there is some kind of evolutionary trend, except in so far as a carver would go, or his design purpose would take him, a little further in some direction or other. And this is what we should expect from artist-craftsmen imbued with the idea of form and a feeling for design. I am confident in suggesting, as I have done previously, that, within the range of his customary practice, any one *tohunga whakairo* could have produced any or all of the "stages" one seems to recognise, as he could also have created new forms of his own.

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\* *Tiki and Pou*, 1958; *Taurapa*, 1938; *Tauihu* 1956, *Pare of Human Figure* composition, 1960; *Spiral-dominated Compositions in Pare*, 1962.

It is desirable to state this at the outset lest the adoption of a convenient arrangement for description should give the impression of a classification. Classification or grouping will come into discussion later, in the second section, on the question of Maori art regions; but here again, with so many uncertain localizations and with awareness of Maori propensity for travel, either with friendly or with hostile intent, one may well hesitate to define boundaries, or to make, too readily, locality attributions from style.

#### NATURAL REPRESENTATION. PLATE 40

None of our first group, of naturalistic head sculptures, is entirely so, or even approaches the anatomical accuracy of classical Western statuary; each has some feature emphasised though hardly yet formalised: the high domed forehead of numbers 2 and 6, the thick lips of 1 and 2 and the broad nose of 3 and 5. It is a question which of the four men is the most natural: number 3, if not a close likeness of personal portraiture, undoubtedly bespeaks the calm dignity the Maori expected to see in a leader. His neighbour on this plate, number 4, is of like demeanour. It is only in number 4 of this group that tattooing is at all emphasized. We may notice emphasis in another direction, in number 6 the eyes made staring with shell inlay.

We could also differ as to the relative closeness to nature of the two female heads; except for the high stylized hair and comb the vote might go to number 2 whose delicate tattooing is a gentle enhancement. It is a pity we have to refer to these truly feminine creatures by number; they deserve names. Neither do we know where either of them lived. Each has been paid a compliment, *Secunda* by the Dominion Museum — she was their Christmas card in 1952, and *Quinta* by the nineteenth century catalogue in the British Museum: on each card is a lightly outlined sketch for identification, but when he came to the little Maori girl he was constrained to spend no doubt an hour or more to leave there a completely and exquisitely modelled pen-and-ink drawing.

The male figures are from not far separated localities — Gisborne, East Cape, Opotiki. They do not provide a very clear opening for our discussion, later, on regional styles; but naturalism by intention is the absence of, or restraint from, stylization, which is what constitutes a style.

#### INTENSE EXPRESSION: PLATE 41

The heads shown on Plate 41 are still naturalistic but with heightened expression achieved by emphasis of one or more features. In each of them the carver has incised the tattooing more deeply to strengthen the overall pattern, while the eyes, made more prominent with shell inlay, now introduce a staring effect which we shall see as a wide-eyed glare in later carvings. In 5 and 6 the intensity of expression is further concentrated by the slant of the eyes combined with even stronger definition of the *moko* pattern. We can observe in 4 and 6 a strong curve of tattoo bands encircling the mouth, the latter made assertive with lip grooving in 6, and positively hostile with an armature of teeth in 3. The mouth, which in 3 is moderately open but evenly elliptical, as in speaking, in 6 is made mobile by the quite moderately dumb-bell form of the lips, the inception, more properly the introduction to us here, of the widely defiant mouth of other carvings, which in turn becomes a basic element in the strongly stylized face mask.



Already here in naturalistic renderings we see variation in proportion, heightening in 1 and widening moderately in 6. Unfortunately we have no locality record for any of these carvings.

#### MOKO: DECORATIVE ART. PLATES 42 TO 44.

The "featuring" of full *moko* in the naturally proportioned faces grouped for Plate 42, being accurate delineation albeit of ornament, is true realism. The faithfulness to the "fair copy", the tattooed face itself, may be gauged by comparing numbers 1 and 3 of Plate 43, the former a life cast made many years ago in this museum of the face of Wiremu te Manawa. Carvings portraying the tattooed face become part of Maori decorative art in so far as the natural model had been made decorative by a long and painful operation.

Number 3 of Plate 42, is of local interest; it is one of the identical pair of *amo*, front barge-board supports, of this museum's exceptionally large *pataka*, Puawai o te Arawa, the Flower of the Arawa, from Maketu, Bay of Plenty. Te Pokiha Taranui, a leading Arawa chieftain, built it in 1868. The embracing couple, symbolising the basic idea of the food-store, fruitfulness, is the most frequently seen motive for the *amo* of a *pataka*, but nowhere else, I think, do we find the male and female *moko* in better appearance than here.

By way of contrast Plate 42, number 4, from the Hunterian Museum, Glasgow, shows that a completely untattooed pair also can have a firmly expressive quality. The embracing pair design was sometimes set on the *kuwaha*, doorway panel, of a *pataka*.

The faces illustrated on Plate 44 add little beyond number and variety to the examples already discussed: number 1 enables us to mark the placidity of aspect ensuing when the full tattoo pattern is firmly asserted and number 4 the more stark realism when eyes and teeth are emphasised. They are all canoe prow ornaments, affixed basally at the front of the trapezoid type of *tauihu*; their common function by no means induced a sameness of expression.

#### ELASTIC PROPORTION: PLATE 45.

Two modest developments in style to be noted in the faces grouped on Plate 45 are a vertical lengthening in most and, in two, emphasis again of the *moko* by deeper carving. Number 1 is the head of a large *tiki* figure surmounting a *rahui*, a high post set up to warn against entry to an area temporarily made *tapu*. In 1846 the constantly steaming cliff behind the Te Rapa village at the southern end of Lake Taupo slid down to engulf the houses and their occupants including the paramount chief Te Heuheu Mananui. The area accordingly became *tapu* and was so observed for twelve months.

Numbers 2 and 3 are *tekoteko*, the latter of unknown provenance in the Bishop Museum, the former part of a finely carved small house gable from near Thames presented to the museum in 1877 by the chief Ngahuruhuru; the two lower faces of this group, 3 and 4, have the interest of showing to what high narrowness the Maori could extend a head and yet maintain acceptable naturalism. Expressive though simple modelling confers quiet dignity on 5, while raised ridge "tattooing" gives a rugged texture to 6; black paint asserts the tattoo pattern somewhat starkly in number 7.

The last, number 8, introduces a feature we shall see more markedly in Plate 50: modelling plus emphasized tattooing manifesting more of placid patterning than of the primarily intended dynamism. Design combined with naturalism, as we see it here, is the portent for the patterns and abstractions which are to follow.

#### NATURALISM BROADENED: PLATE 46.

It may be that to widen by much a naturally featured face is not easy; I cannot recall that it has been the successful practice of cartoonists however versatile. Nor apparently did the Maori carver find it easy; at least he left very few examples, none of them really wide.

Numbers 1 and 2 of Plate 46 are only a little beyond normal; one feels that the ample countenance of either could have found a semblance in the *ariki* or among the senior *rangatira* of a Maori community. Number 1, when eye-inlay had been affixed, might even have looked aggressive, but the narrow eyes and moderately parted lips of number 2 present us with a more reserved though alert demeanour.

Number 3 is the broadest naturalistic face we can find. Pukaki, a notable Arawa chieftain of the eighteenth century, stands in this museum, an altogether massive statue for which the exceptionally wide head is quite appropriate. He, too, is of grave aspect with by no means vigorous but quietly ornamental *moko*, and you may notice a neat sculptural device — the normal eye area made smooth leaving it to the deep brow shadow to provide a substitute impression, effective in our Maori Court, and even more so in the open sunlight where Pukaki originally stood. We have no locality record for number 2; the others stood beside Lake Rotorua, Pukaki at Te Ngai.

#### DEFIANCE BECOMES DECORATION: PLATE 47.

The not infrequent Pakeha response to Maori sculpture or wood-carving is the comment: "distorted; grotesque", and I suppose there's no denying it; yet one can confidently rebuke the denigratory overtone of the words and uphold the Maori craftsman's truly artistic purpose, and achievement. That purpose, in the examples presented in Plate 47 was primarily the vigorous expression of feeling, the portrayal of a mood of energetic defiance, as is clearly manifest in 1 and 2.

While this was the sculptor's prior intention, the very method and form he used to express it introduced another concept with some conflict in art motive. "Distortion" is but the emphasis of features, achieved here by rendering forehead and lips in broad raised bands and enlarging the eye-sockets, whereby besides outlining features they also became areas inviting decoration.

This does not diminish defiance in the first two, and does so only slightly in number 3; but in the others ornament becomes so broadly applied that it asserts itself above portrayal of expression; moreover, in overall presentation, in the form and ordering of bands and curves, a further element, the quality of proportion, makes its appearance, also that of balance and of symmetry, so that with their further development an aesthetic motive — design — in large measure supersedes the portrayal of defiance as primarily delineated.

So it may seem to us, to the Pakeha unaware of the meaning which gave origin to these design forms. Could it have been otherwise with the



eighteenth century Maori community, or with its wood carvers? The question occurring to one here is whether, after having attained these decorative art forms, the carver remained in full awareness of the underlying meanings and continued to believe that his forms expressed the primarily intended feelings; or had he, now concentrating on the design, forgotten the symbol? Moreover, were the Maori beholders who accepted and responded to the decorative aesthetic, still aware of and affected by the meaning originally inherent in what was before them?

The question, having to do with conditions of two hundred years ago, perhaps remains unanswerable, unless light should be thrown on it through study of some other native art still being practised in an unmodified tribal community. A question nearer home could be: to what extent are our present day Maori carvers presenting symbols with meaning, or creating art forms only for art's sake?

#### MASKS IN SQUARE OUTLINE: PLATE 48.

Naturalism, by definition, implies restraint or limitation, and this in bodily proportion as well as features; but not altogether, for the naturally featured head could, as we have seen, be lengthened vertically (Plate 45), although horizontal extension was not so readily attempted. Stylization, although its first step may be simplification, offers better opportunity and invitation to exploit and develop form itself, as the Maori soon discovered, and it was the defiant mask convention that enabled him to "distort" the face acceptably, to extend it upwards or to draw it out sideways as he himself wished, or as the proportions of his given area required.

When the stylized face had been turned to profile, even better scope offered for ingenious distortions and for designs leading to patterns of lively elegance: a later paper, on the *manaia*, will consider these in some detail.

The group we now approach, Plate 48, show the near-square as still close enough to normal face proportions to make naturalism or stylization equally appropriate. We see in number 1 a face in the simplest naturalism with only the slight woman's tattoo pattern to disturb the almost Buddha-like serenity — there were a few female *Bodhisatva*, were there not?

In number 2 we see again the fully tattooed male face: it surmounted a palisade gateway, and its perforated eyes and mouth were intended to give, from afar, assurance of a watchful reception, with announcement of welcome or hostility according to whether you were approaching as friend or foe.

Examination of numbers 3 and 4 reveals that in a free-standing image the carver could allow himself a degree of freedom for outline detail, and in association with it to introduce (number 4) a pierced design.

Ornamental detail is sparingly applied in these semi-naturalistic masks, nor has it, in number 5, yet become as elaborate as we see it elsewhere. I had thought to nominate number 5 as a "typical" stylized mask, but nothing can be regarded as typical of so wide a range where every stage or variety of simplicity or complexity is to be seen.

Locality is recorded for only one of this group, number 2 from the Okarewa Pa, Whirinaki River, south-eastern Rotorua district.

#### COVERING WIDE BOARDS: PLATE 49.

Among the many occasions for carving a full-face mask, and I give illustrations of but a quarter of those which I have, there appear to have been rather fewer widely outdrawn than for tall and narrow designs, how widely and how effectively these few photographs will show. Here we have a nearly square *koruru* (number 2), the verandah gable ornament of a carved house; numbers 3 and 5 are the end and the longer side of a large *waka huia*, a box for valued feathers. The not very large house at Manutuke, nine miles inland from Gisborne, has the unusual feature of a 8 or 9 inch high base to the wall-carvings. These bases extend right across the *poupou* for the figure to stand upon, and are necessarily very wide (number 6). Fig. 4, of intermediate width, is also an interior house unit; at least it is stated in Hamilton's *Maori Art* (p. 130) to be one of the skirting boards (*epa*) between the *poupou*, of the Turanga house in the Dominion Museum, but I have not been able to identify it there. It does have considerable resemblance in details to the faces of the *amo* of this house, also to the centre carving within the doorway. There are, moreover, similarities between number 4 and number 2, both in general design, except eye-sockets and eyebrows, also in the teeth and in the spirals and loops of the broad lips and forehead, and in the lug-and-peg fastener (dummies in both cases I suspect) on the cheeks. The Turanga house locality is Manutuke, that of number 2 also is Poverty Bay.

These carvings exemplify the essential plasticity of the stylized mask design; no doubt it could be widened even further than number 6, but I doubt if it ever would have, because the Maori had a ready sense of proportion and of the acceptable limits of such extension; moreover his repertoire included too many alternatives, i.e. of the profile *manaia* and of whole-figure conventions, to allow him to fall into awkward design situations.

#### INCREASING HEIGHT: PLATES 50 TO 53.

In the next plate (50) we group a quartet of stylized faces varying slightly from natural to somewhat heightened proportion, and follow in the same plate with another four again slightly higher and narrower. This trend continues gradually in the succeeding illustrations, but it is gradual only as I have chosen to arrange the twenty-five photographs in these four plates. The word "trend" should not be taken as implying a steady and progressive increase in height or narrowness by a given school of practising *tohunga*. The gentlest winds of change have constantly drifted in all directions over Maori art, which found its expression either in the occasion's practical requirements of size and shape or in the individual artist's feeling for form or design, either or both. If we will but look we shall see in every piece an example of creative design, meet for the occasion.

As well as in observing the changes in proportion themselves, there is no little interest in noting the details and devices that served the carver's purpose — for example his method of drawing up to extreme height. The stylized mouth, he apparently thought, should remain wide across; to over-open it upwards would be unacceptable. Instead, taking a hint from the oblique eye-socket, he found opportunity, and satisfaction no doubt, in lifting upward the whole of the upper face: nostrils, cheek-bones, eyes and forehead (Plate 52).

It would be tedious for me to describe details: better that you yourself should examine at leisure the last five illustrations of this group (Plates 52 and 53), and perceive the aptness with which the *tohunga whakairo* could



cover and adorn an area with bands and curves and blank spaces. The essential features of a human face are here arranged and combined in a design for which the term "decorative art", or either word by itself, is appropriate and just.

### REGIONAL STYLES

In approaching the question of regional art styles or style areas, we should give prior attention to the factors comprising the problem and the criteria for our comparisons and judgments; some are inherent in the definition of art style area and, with others, could be:

a style should stand apart, different and readily distinguishable from other styles;

most, or a considerable proportion, of the known examples of a style should be from the one region, and the style should be prominent, if not dominant, in that region;

examples of the style not actually within the area should occur near rather than distant from it; in other words diffusion from the area should be steadily diminishing, though separated localities in frequent intercourse might share a style or its elements;

a style should not be more strongly correlated with a particular object or type of object than with an area;

art areas should be based on pre-European pieces of definite provenance.

Such precise conditions could prevail only where a community had remained undisturbed and unmodified by intrusive elements; European occupation in New Zealand, bringing increased opportunities and incentives for movement and intercommunication, soon began to obscure boundaries of all kinds. Although in the early years of contact not a few good stone-carved art objects were acquired by Europeans to be taken or sent home, they were nearly all small, easily carried articles; moreover, locality records were seldom made, or, if they were, have almost invariably been lost. Large carvings, as of houses or canoes, through size or through being part of a structure and in a way communally owned, would hardly have been obtainable, and by the time administrators were in a position to acquire carvings, as Sir George Grey did for the British Museum, steel work only was available, and here again localities were hardly ever recorded. Reliably localized Maori objects are rare in northern hemisphere museums. Our own museums, also, contain many unlocalized specimens acquired, not from the original owners or collectors but from their descendants or relatives.

The few reliably localized early pieces in New Zealand museums have been considerably augmented over the years by swamp-recovered specimens. I was surprised on checking to find that in my forty years here swamp-recovered acquisitions have been almost one each year; Taranaki Museum recoveries have been equally gratifying. It is such specimens that will best help to elucidate pre-European art areas.

Museums also have many steel-carved pieces of confirmed provenance as well as those uncertain or unknown. A century or more of building carved houses, and in the earlier years of canoe construction, sometimes with the individual carvers known as well as the tribe, has produced a considerable body of carving consistent in style, sufficient to indicate that a tribal or area tradition was being followed. This is good in its way, but the light these throw on the pre-Pakeha art of the area must by its nature be uncertain, and the uncertainty is increased by there being, in this area of last century house building (Bay of Plenty, East Coast, Hawkes Bay, Wellington), very little other than 19th century carving available for our study. Excluding a few naturalistic sculptured figures, which because they are natural are much alike, only six swamp-recovered pieces or house sets (a *pataka* doorway, Thornton, Dominion Museum; a *pare*, Te Puke, a *taurapa* Tauranga, a *poupou* from near Opotiki, the Te Kaha *pataka* carvings, and a *poupou*, Whangara, all in this museum) are known to me.

One could include a number of uncertainly localized early pieces in, say, East Coast or Bay of Plenty style, but this would be to judge the horse from the cart; style areas cannot be established through carvings localized on the basis of style. Such may legitimately be cited as following a certain style, but not to define its area.

However, we should not expect to find in art, a cultural phenomenon, a clear-cut order of style areas comparable to the distribution areas of plants or animals, for which the basis of classification is the single line of physical heredity. Even though art forms may be in such close rapport with the customs and requirements of a community as to be identifiable with it, art develops through the moods of individuals and out of their responses to what they see and hear wherever it may come from.

The study material for style areas therefore comprises: firstly the by no means numerous pieces of pre-European origin, and secondly the very considerable number of nineteenth century steel-carved examples. Each group as it happens becomes separately the major evidence in respect to one or the other of the two major North Island art-style regions that can be recognised: for the Northern-Western third of the island where carving appears to have been very little continued after European contact we have most of the pre-European swamp-recovered pieces, while for the much greater East-Central-Southern region where few swamp-recoveries have been made we have the abundance of early nineteenth century work.

We continue with drawings and descriptions of faces and masks from each area, noting the differences between them, also the likenesses and such inter-relationships as they may suggest. The latter are by no means non-existent between the three well-differentiated style-areas, Northern, Hauraki, Taranaki, which comprise the Northern-Western region, which we will consider first.

Masks and faces are of course not the whole of the evidence; this should include body and limb forms and decorative detail together with the summation of all these in overall composition. The examples illustrated, except one, have the virtue of precise locality record for both stone and steel work; the latter we think are of sufficiently early nineteenth century date for us to regard them, not certainly but with a fair measure of confidence, as pointing to the classical pre-Pakeha style of their respective areas.



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Fig. 1a

1b

1c

The Kaitaia carving (Fig. 1a) stands *sui generis* in Maori wood-sculpture, yet not altogether, for its lintel form and composition are but an outward extended *pare* design. It is its central figure that sends us to look around for possible Oceanic relationship, and further afield to Borneo where Skinner (1924:237, Pl. 9) shows it in comparison with a roof-ridge feature. He, and McEwen (1966:417) both regard it as akin also to the Society Islands two-man carving described by Emory (1931:253-4), and, thereby, as pointing towards an early rectilinear art postulated for New Zealand and Polynesia. McEwen also regards the central figure as reminiscent of Austral Island work.

Our figure 1a-c, shows that, except for the triangular outline of the Kaitaia and Society Islands faces, the three are very unlike in feature portrayal i.e. eyes, nose, and mouth; other Society Islands faces also differ in every way from Kaitaia. Further unlikeness appears in body form: the Kaitaia head slopes forward over an indrawn dwarf body, in marked contrast to the erect, forward-protruding, naturally proportioned bodies of Austral and most Society Islands images, while the body-stylization of the two-man carving is quite of its own kind, indeed unique within its own group.

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Fig. 2a

2b

2c

2d

Triangular faces are uncommon but not rare in Maori carving appearing usually in mask designs (Fig. 12a). The Kaitaia figure stands aloof even from its immediate Northland neighbours whose elongated heads become narrower above (Figs. 2 and 3) not below. The exception, and exceptions are the rule with our versatile Maori carvers, is the face of the Three Kings slab described by the writer in 1948 (p.207); this is undoubtedly northern in decoration (Fig. 6b) but is a formalized mask, not a naturalistic rendering. Its closer affinity would be with Taranaki faces (Figs. 7 and 8).

The northern style is sufficiently attested in a number of old bone-chests (Fig. 2) mainly Hokianga-Whangaroa in provenance but known

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Fig 3a

3b

3c

3d

also from Raglan (Dominion Museum, Fig 2d) and, a single ploughed up imperfect specimen, from Tauranga (Auckland Museum). The style is further exemplified in *poupou* (Takahue, Fig. 3c and Kaipara, Fig. 3a and b) and in some *waka huia*, though of the latter only one is of definite provenance.

The style characteristics are the up-lengthened head narrowing above the eyes; features outlined by narrow decorative bands in shallow relief; the tongue when present expanded distally and protruding sideways; the body smooth, undulating, with the surface-ornamented limbs elegantly disposed in countervailing curves.

Several articles have been attributed, on style, to Northland, resulting at times in some confusion. The exceptionally fine trapezoid canoe-prow in the British Museum is undoubtedly northern in style and details and, apparently on this basis, has given rise to the belief that the trapezoid prow itself is the "northern type". But the British Museum prow, the only one with northern style figures and surface detail, is unlocalized. A firm northern provenance for the trapezoid prow is Bream Bay (D'Urville's plates 49 and 60); a doubtful one in our museum, was "captured at Great Barrier by Ngati Whatua from Kahungunu", who had obtained it, where? Other records are Auckland (Hamilton, Maori Art pl V, on the basis of photographs obtained at Auckland (!), though one was repeated by the Princes Street dealer E. Craig when he sold it to Canterbury Museum); and Waikato River (Auckland Museum). A small pre-European prow from Mokau (Archey 1956:373) is trapezoid in outline but with an internal design that is the simplest version of the double-spiral composition of the fully ornamented *tauihu* of the *waka taua*, the great war canoe of coast-wide distribution. The known localities of the trapezoid prow and the different art renderings it displays show that it was not of restricted distribution.

The *poupou* whose head is our Fig. 3d is in like case, often cited as northern which its patent similarity to a b and c makes very likely; its provenance is "near Auckland", but we do not know whether from to the north, south, east or west, or how near is 'near'.

The refined economy in design of c deserves more than a glance; in this respect all these four stand in marked contrast to the intricately involved patterns of several northern type, but still unlocalized, *waka huia*. One of these warrants comment: presented to Peabody Museum, Salem, by Captain W. Richardson in 1807 (Dodge, 1941: 20; Plate I,42) it is



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Fig. 4a

4b

4c

obviously steel-carved, and is in match-white unhandled condition. One can only guess a Whangarei to Whangaroa locality for this splendid carving, and only guess again that the chisel or knife had been Richardson's gift to the carver.

We are without information as to the possible extension of the Northern style south of the Waitemata. "Near Auckland", just mentioned, cannot be taken into account, moreover the reason for our ignorance, the overwhelming of the Tamaki tribes in the 1820's by the Kaipara Ngati Whatua, is itself two-way evidence: either it destroyed whatever of art that may have been here, or it indicates an intertribal hostility and opposition that could have prevented a sharing of art style. Nor did the style appear to have been canoe-borne *via* the Firth of Thames, for it was along this shore that the clearly different, though related, Hauraki style is well documented by swamp recoveries. The central face of the Patatonga *pare*, one of the finest examples of Maori art, is outlined in Fig. 4b, flanked by two other faces from a close nearby recovery. The sub-rectangular outline is in a way the northern style kept to more natural head proportions; the Hauraki style shares with Northern, and also with Taranaki, faces bare of detail ornament except for the lightly bar-crossed narrow bands which outline eye-brows and lips. The three styles have also in common smooth un-ornamented bodies, with the legs alone decorated—in pleasant shallow pattern.

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Fig. 5a

5b

5c

The greater width of the faces of Fig. 5 is in a way a crowded down height imposed by the limited area of the small all-over patterned *pare* of which they are the central features. Fig. 6c, although recovered it is said from seven feet below ground on the shore of the Firth of Thames, seems likely to be an intrusion — all four carvings of the *pataka* set of which it is one are in typical East Coast style (cf. Fig. 16).

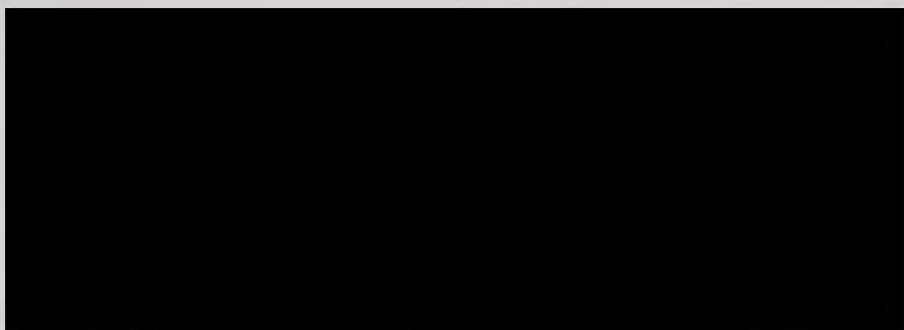


Fig. 6a

6b

6c

While the sharing of basic features by Northland-Hauraki-Taranaki affirms a measure of unity for the whole northern-western North Island region, the separate individuality of Taranaki is patently asserted by the flexure and sinuosity of entwined bodies and limbs and by the ample curves and loops (Figs. 7 and 8) which give the Taranaki face its



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Fig. 7a

7b

7c

immediately recognisable appearance. Especially typical are two median prominences: a pointed cone, high usually but not invariably, above the forehead, and a sharp-pointed chin; chins here however may be evenly rounded. A narrow tongue curves sideways over the lower lip.



Fig. 8a

8b

8c

The untypical (in its even roundness) form of the Manukorihi *pa* face (Fig. 9c) is also the outcome of a compositional hazard: it is the central feature of an unusually low or narrow *pare*. It has likenesses to the small *poupou* mask from Tangarakau (Fig 9a), which also has other likenesses



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Fig. 9a

9b

9c

to Taranaki. On conjecturing whether these are of significance for area relationship or only coincidental, one recalls that Waitara was a prolific centre rich in individual variation in both form and detail; Tangarakau is only 44 miles directly inland from it, but over difficult hills not even yet roaded, and its better communication would have been by river south to Wanganui. This Tangarakau piece is the only undoubtedly old house carving from a Wanganui source; an early (1824) nineteenth century post from 57 miles up-river (Te Aomarama) commemorating the birth of Major Kemp (Phillipps 1955:108) and recovered by T. W. Downes from an abandoned and delapidated *pa* site, shows the faces of Kemp's parents with lips (Fig. 10a) much expanded as a low evenly-curved dome covering more than half the face and enclosing a relatively small mouth. This feature, so different from the narrow-lipped wide open mouth of the much further up-river Tangarakau carving, appears, though not quite so large, at Koriniti and around Wanganui, also in Manawatu and Wellington.

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Fig. 10a

10b

10c

10d

In other feature detail than expanded lips, Wanganui to Wellington carving follows the eastern North Island style, while Tangarakau's affinity seems to be more westward to Taranaki than down river.

I do not include Barrow's (1959, 1961) Wanganui style, i.e. of godsticks, as an area style, notwithstanding its being borne by a number of godsticks from thereabouts. As an art style it is by no means restricted to the Wanganui district, either for godsticks or for other objects. It is seen in practically all *toki pou tangata*, in heads on feeding funnels, on *putorino* and on the larger faces of the curious but always finely carved slotted objects whose identification and use still evade us; all of these are of New Zealand-wide occurrence. "Provenance" assigned on the basis of the "Wanganui style" is, I submit, invalid for uncertainty.

Entitlement to regional status could perhaps better be accorded the stick-gods uncovered by a receding lake level near Waverley and described by T. W. Downes (1932), and some also from near Wanganui. But being undoubtedly very early and also near-naturalistic, they do not comprise one of the pattern types we are discussing of classical Maori art styles; nor do they suggest a basis of origin for any one of them.

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Fig. 11a

11b

11c

11d

11e

The non-scale drawings of Fig. 11, with that of an unusually long-faced canoe ornament from upper Wanganui river, are included here for record.

There are examples a-plenty of wood-sculpture from the second major art region, i.e. the remainder of the North Island — from Bay of Plenty through the centre and the east coast to Wellington. So much of good quality stands in fine carved houses or is preserved in museums as to suggest, nay, to affirm, that carving neither faltered here nor slackened in vigour because of European occupation. It would seem that wherever there was material or economic well being, the carving of commemorative statues, the building of *whare whakairo*, the production of canoe prows and sternposts and of smaller art objects such as treasure boxes and musical instruments, was actively continued.

Altogether this output would seem to indicate a half-century of burgeoning of Maori art inspired perhaps equally by prosperity and by new steel tools. We do not here suggest, as if following Groube 1964, that the richly carved *whare runanga* first appeared in early Pakeha times: large stone-tool house carvings in museums (the Helensville planks, Patetonga *pare*, and Te Kaha *pataka* in Auckland) stand against this view. Building status was, however, certainly sought in mid-nineteenth century. To cite Auckland examples again: although Pokiha Taranui (Major Fox) could scarcely, in decency, outbuild Rangitihi, *whare whakairo* of his elder brother Waata Taranui, he could, and did, build an outside *pataka*, Te Puawai o te Arawa. Yet the stone-carved Patetonga *pare* outmatches in size Rangitihi's *pare*, and also that of the still larger house Hotunui. Had Major Fox known, in 1868, of the existence and size of the Te Kaha *pataka*, Te Puawai could conceivably have been even larger.

What to the early nineteenth century Maori was no doubt but a continuing of usual art activity, could well seem to us Pakeha today almost as a renaissance, but, again for us, a renaissance for which we now seek uncertainly for the classical prototypes. In the outcome there is now before us a medley of trends and styles throughout the whole region, and to unravel it would seem almost to call for T. S. Eliot's "Time yet for a hundred indecisions, and for a hundred visions and revisions".

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Fig. 12a

12b

12c

The principal evidence for these area styles, better than canoes which travel\*, will be the carvings of the few still standing houses of the first half of the century, with the reservation that the evidence for a district may be a single house, the work and the style of only one *tohunga whakairo* or his immediate family group. Nevertheless McEwen (1966: 419-426) has shown that beyond quite local styles some wider areas are to be recognised, though his outline of, for example, the Kahungunu east-coast style is, as he says, a description of the notable carving of Te Hau ki Turanga, now in the Dominion Museum. Had the nearby and not much later house, Turanganui a Kiwa, been the model, important features such as feet, hands, and tongue would have proved different. Moreover, details of both these Manutuke houses are seen elsewhere, even as far away as Rotorua (head form, both outline and detail), and a characteristic detail such as the spiral on eye-pupil even in Northland, on Kawau Island and near Pipiriki. But it is a combination of characters that defines a style, though even this eludes us in this enterprising and diversified region. While therefore we now present drawings of localised carvings of the Central-Eastern region we are well aware that the features noted are not precise area characteristics, but reflect, rather, nineteenth century intercommunication of people and interchange of ideas.

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Fig. 13a

13b

13c

An Arawa style is readily recognisable (Figs. 12 and 13): the sides of faces are usually gently incurved to a slightly less than full-width mouth. The diagonal eye-socket with low-arched eyebrows, the *wheku* type

\* Te Toki a Tapiri, built in the eighteen forties on the East Coast, was brought to Auckland as an inter-tribal gift.



(McEwen 1966:421), is commonest for the *poupou* of houses; on broader slabs in *pataka*, or on broad superimposed figures, round arched eyebrows with circular eyes (*koruru* type) are as common as the *wheku*. Almost invariably there are round, or oval cheek-bone bosses.

The recognition by Maori house carvers or designers of the architectural forte of some uniformity of style in a series is evident throughout the East-Central-South region, and nowhere less than in Rotorua. All the *poupou* faces of our house Rangitihī — fine carvings be it said and rivalling Mr McEwen's choice, Te Hau ki Turanga — are of the high sloping diagonal type (Plate 52, Fig. 1); a Ngatai Porou house, Porourangi, impressed me many years ago not so much by the standard of any one *poupou* but by its unity in carving design — an architectural *ensemble*.

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Fig. 14a

14b

14c

In Rangitihī faces, the elongated eye-socket and its brow ridges stay close together, whether sloping high or low; in other Arawa faces of our drawings (Figs. 12c, 13a) the eye-lines remain low but the brow-ridges are lifted away from them right to the vertex, where they become of necessity quite narrow bands. By this means the carver, always seeking variety, achieves a high smooth area between eyes and eyebrows.

Fig. 14a is another wide, low face compressed into a restricted design space; its eyes are but wide low swellings. Our figures 14b and c are from mid-Bay of Plenty and from Te Kaha; they resemble each other although separated by the Matatua-Hotunui house centre (Whakatane district) of distinct Ngati Porou affinity. Both are of pre-European age, which with their likeness to one another, might be thought significant for possible earlier art-area connections.

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Fig. 15a

15b

15c

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Tattooed Maori Head. Natural History Museum, La Rochelle.

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1. Kaiti, *tekoteko*, whereabouts unknown. Dominion Museum neg. 7312.
2. Locality unknown. Dominion Museum 10955.
3. Opotiki district. Auckland Museum 5167.
4. East Cape district. Auckland Museum 163.



the local manner were content to follow it, no art could have achieved much through their unambitious routine; no art could attain to such wide divergences in style and variety within every style without discernment, imagination and enterprise.

What was an almost unfailing quality in Maori art was felicity in design, and this argues the existence among its exponents of sensitivity and an alertness to design potential in whatever task was in hand. The leader of a group of carvers, the *tohunga whakairo*, would, besides being himself sensitive and inventive, have observed that neighbouring as well as distant fields were green, and, while having a natural preference for and loyalty to his own school, he would see possibilities elsewhere and respond to them, whereby boundaries would from time to time be crossed.

In early European days exchange of carvers was not unknown. Mr McEwen has drawn my attention to Cruise (1823:27) who, when visiting the chief Weterere on the banks of the Waikare river in the Bay of Islands in 1820, was told that the carver then working on a new *pataka* had been brought from Thames (a distance of over one hundred miles from Waikare), for that purpose.

There would have been little interchange in the early years of Maori settlement of this country, when communities were fewer and further apart, and these were the conditions conducive to local style development.

A wider question that ensues, a possible overall distribution pattern of style areas seen in relation to tribal canoe areas, leads us back to the more fundamental problem of the origin(s) or the derivative source(s) of Maori art itself.

These questions may be out of place in a paper on masks and faces which as we indicated earlier, form but part of the whole evidence, and which in any case do not appear to have revealed such marked differences as are evident in body form. A preliminary statement of the factors involved, even some tentative conclusions, could, however, invite comment and bring forward other aspects of the problem, whereby a fuller investigation could more profitably be undertaken.

We have seen that stylized faces, masks, as I call them, do stand in two major regional styles; these regions differ even more markedly in the active stance of figures themselves in the Northland to Taranaki region, in their rhythmic undulation and sometimes intertwining, in contrast to the usual upright, steady pose of major figures in the Bay of Plenty to Wellington region. Is it then at all significant that these two art-style regions can also be seen as two separate groups of tribal canoe-ancestry areas? These, as given in Sir Peter Buck's "Coming of the Maori" (Hiroa, 1949:337) are:-

CANOES	TRIBES	DISTRICTS
Tainui	Waikato tribes, Ngati Haua, Ngati Maniapoto, Ngati Maru, Ngati Paoa, Ngati Raukawa, Ngatitooa, Ngaitai (Bay of Plenty)	Waikato, King Country, Hauraki, Coromandel, Cambridge, Kawhia
Tokomaru	Ngati Tama, Ngati Mutunga, Ngati Rahiri, Manukorihi, Puketapu, Atiawa, Ngati Maru	North and Central Taranaki

Kurahaupo	Taranaki, Atihau (Whanganui), Ngatiapa, Rangitane, Muau-poko, Te Aupori, Te Rarawa	Taranaki, Wanganui, Manawatu, Rangitikei, Horowhenua, North Auckland
Aotea	Ngati Ruanui, Ngarauru, Atihau	South Taranaki, Wanganui
Mamari	Ngapuhi, Rarawa, Aupouri	North Auckland
Mahuhu	Ngati Whatua	Kaipara, Auckland
Te Arawa	Ngati Pikiao, Ngati Rangitihia, Ngati Rangiwewehi, Ngati Whakaue, Tuhourangi, Ngati Tuwharetoa	Rotorua, Taupo
Matatua	Ngatiawa, Tuhoe, Whakatohea, Whanau a Apanui	Whakatane, Urewera, Bay of Plenty
Takitimu	Rongowhakaata, Ngati Kahungunu, Ngaitahu	Poverty Bay, Hawkes Bay, Wairarapa, South Island
Horouta	Ngati Porou	East Coast of North Island

Assuming one common origin for all Maori wood-sculpture, we might see conditions for regional art differentiation either within the field of physical geography, or, if we knew tribal histories in sufficient detail and for a long enough period, in separation arising from their socio-political history.

The alternative is separate overseas (Oceanic) origin for these two art-or-canoe regions. Our present knowledge of Polynesian art forms points not to art form but only to content, the human figure, as an element in common. On the other hand we see in Maori art itself, despite variations, every appearance of the art styles of this country having all developed through the same motive and manner, stylizations of the human figure, stylizations which also share too much of manner and detail as to argue separate origins for them.

#### SOURCE RECORD FOR TEXT-FIGURES (1-18)

Initials (AM etc.) indicate the present locale of specimens.

AM Auckland Museum.  
 BM British Museum.  
 CM Canterbury Museum.  
 DM Dominion Museum.  
 NE No longer existing.  
 NMI National Museum of Ireland.  
 PC Private Collection.  
 PR Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.  
 TM Taranaki Museum.  
 WM Wanganui Museum.

b Raivavae: stone. PR  
 c Society Islands. BM

#### Fig. 2

Burial Chests: Northern  
 a Waimamaku. AM 5654  
 b Bay of Islands. AM 6404  
 c Waimamaku. AM 5660  
 d Raglan, south of. DM

#### Fig. 3

Faces on *poupou*, Northern  
 a Kaipara. AM 6206  
 b Kaipara. AM 6394  
 c Takahue. AM 37399  
 d "Near Auckland." WM 51.751

#### Fig. 1

Maori and Central Polynesia  
 a Kaitaia Carving. AM 6341

- Fig. 4  
Faces on Hauraki *pare*  
a, b, c Patetonga. AM 6189
- Fig. 5  
Hauraki District: faces on *pare*  
a Thornton's Bay. AM 18681  
b Patetonga. AM 6307  
c Oruarangi. AM-(dep.). 33309
- Fig. 6  
a Te Awamutu. PC  
b Three Kings Islands. AM 30411  
c Miranda, Firth of Thames. PC
- Fig. 7  
Faces on *pare*, Taranaki  
a Waitara. TM  
b Te Kawau, north of Awakino.  
AM 6087  
c Waitara. AM 33737
- Fig. 8  
a Waitara. CM  
b Waitara. DM neg. 263  
c Waitara. TM
- Fig. 9  
a Tangarakau. WM  
b Tangarakau? WM  
c Waitara. DM 5249
- Fig. 10  
a Te Ao-marama, Upper Wanganui R. WM  
b Lower Hutt. DM 3775  
c Wellington District. AM 18426  
d Manakau: house Kotahitangata, NE. Koruru, PC, Phillipps 1955, 36.
- Fig. 11  
a Waverley. WM
- b Waverley. WM  
c Wanganui. WM  
d Waverley. WM  
e Upper Wanganui R. WM
- Fig. 12  
a Rotorua. AM 202  
b Maketu. AM 5168  
c Rotorua. AM 184
- Fig. 13  
a Rotorua. AM 5152  
b Rotorua. AM 5152  
c Taupo. AM 4710
- Fig. 14  
a Te Puke. AM 2024  
b Thornton, Bay of Plenty. DM  
c Te Kaha. AM
- Fig. 15  
a Manutuke, Turanga house. DM  
b Poverty Bay. NMI  
c Manutuke, Kohupo tribe former house. NE
- Fig. 16  
a Manutuke, Turanga house. DM  
b " " " "  
c " " " "
- Fig. 17  
a Hawkes Bay district. NE. DM neg. 376  
b Whangara. AM 5017  
c Te Hauke, Hawkes Bay. NE
- Fig. 18  
a East Cape. AM 702  
b Whakatane, Ngati Maru house, Hotunui. AM

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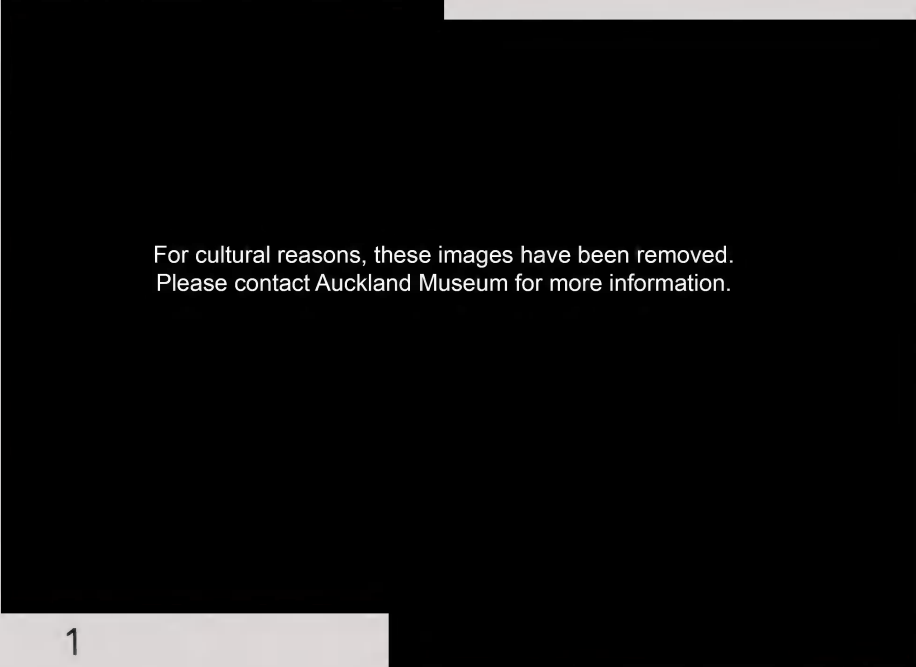
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Tattooed Maori Head. Natural History Museum, La Rochelle.



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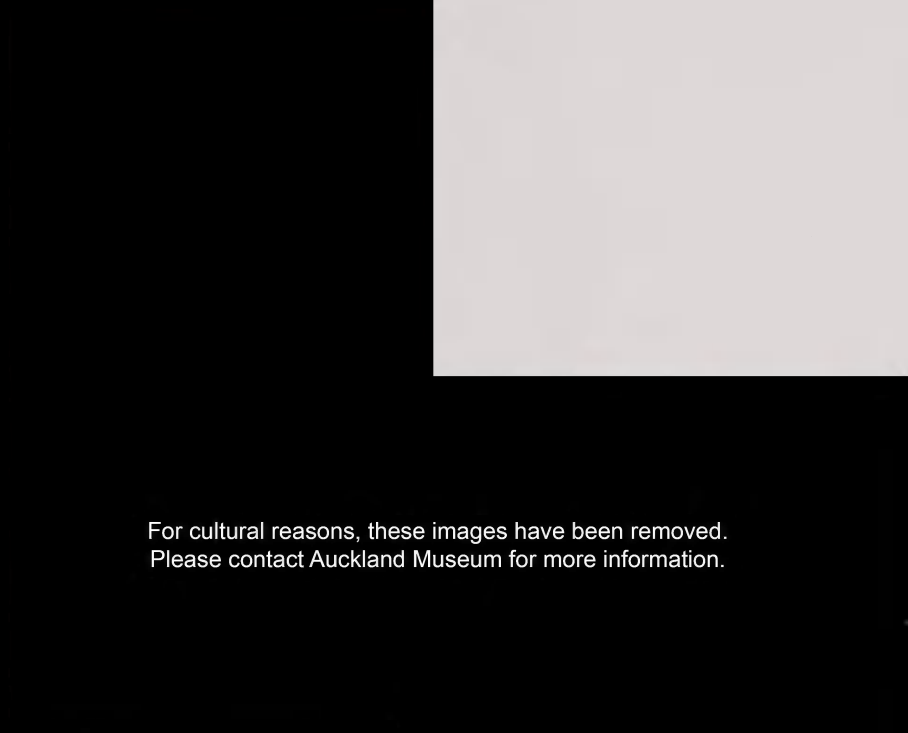


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1. Kaiti, *tekoteko*, whereabouts unknown. Dominion Museum neg. 7312.
2. Locality unknown. Dominion Museum 10955.
3. Opotiki district. Auckland Museum 5167.
4. East Cape district. Auckland Museum 163.





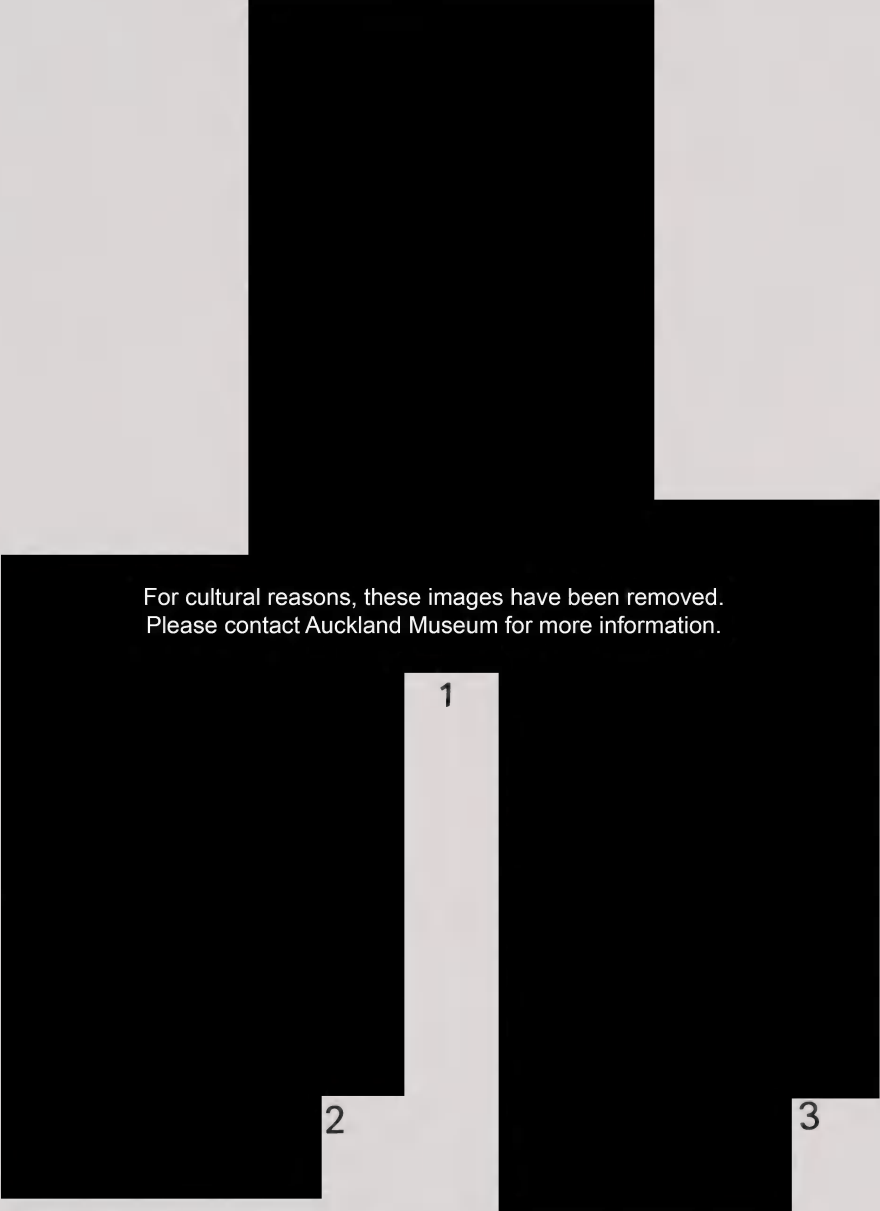
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5. Locality unknown. British Museum.
6. Opotiki. Auckland Museum 5167.

PLATE 41



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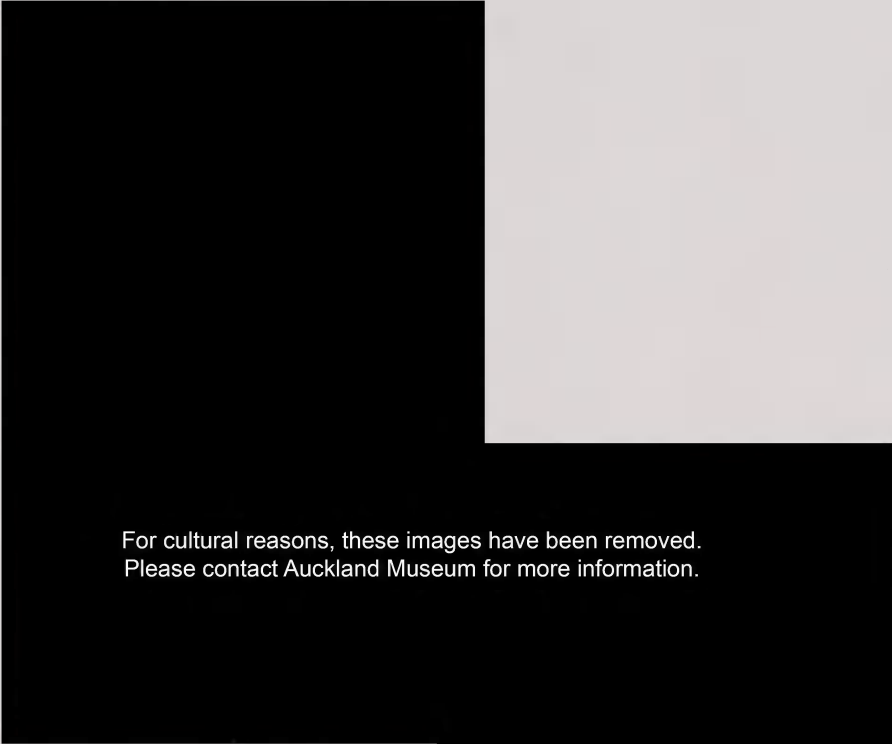
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3. Maketu. Auckland Museum 151.
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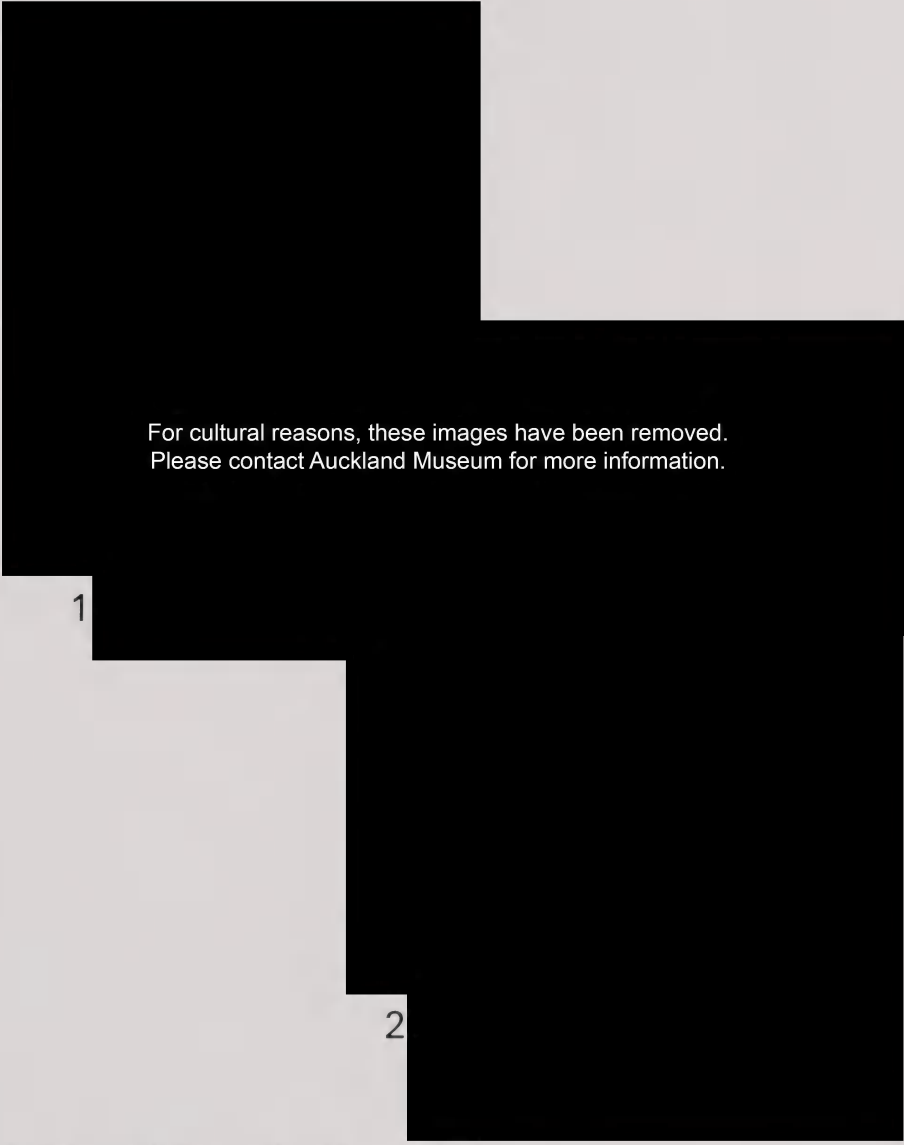
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1. Cast of face Wiremu te Manawa. Auckland Museum.
2. Rotorua: the house of Rangitahi. Auckland Museum 5152.
3. Locality unknown. Dominion Museum neg. 150 B.

PLATE 44



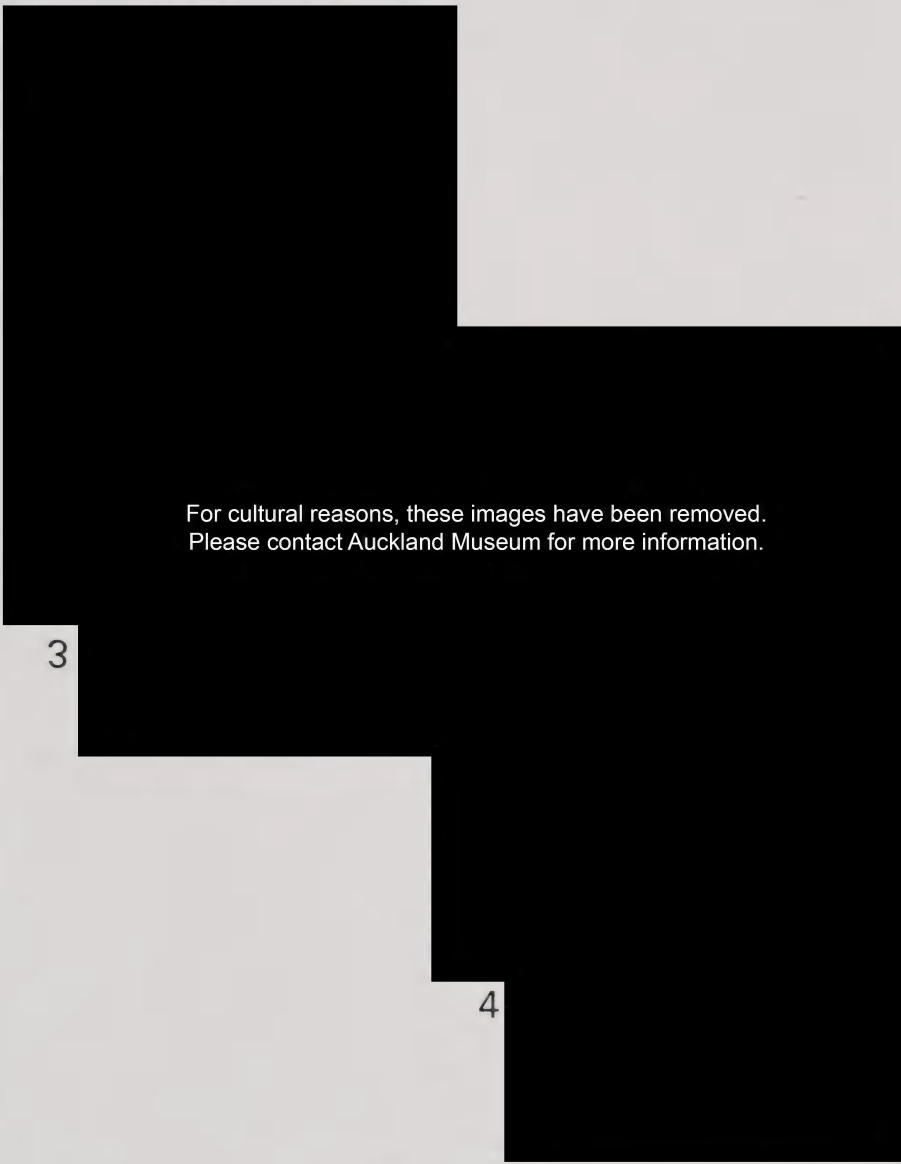
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1. Thames district. Auckland Museum 5998.
2. Auckland (Hamilton, Maori Art: 16). Otago Museum.





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3. Locality unknown. Auckland Museum 2711.
4. Locality unknown. Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford 3313.

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1. Lake Taupo. Auckland Museum 22051.
2. Thames. Auckland Museum 173, but Maori donor was Ngati Whakaue, Rotorua.
3. Locality unknown. Bernice P. Bishop Museum.
4. Locality unknown. Dominion Museum.

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5. East Coast. Dominion Museum.
6. Bay of Islands. Auckland Museum 4317.
7. Locality unknown. Dominion Museum 3910.
8. Whetu Gorge, Bay of Plenty. Otago Museum.

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1. Rotorua. Auckland Museum 172.
2. Locality unknown. British Museum.
3. Lake Rotorua. Auckland Museum 161.



PLATE 47

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1. Tolaga Bay. Auckland Museum 179.
2. East Cape district. Auckland Museum 154.

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3. Wairoa, H.B. Auckland Museum 20103.
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1. Locality unknown. Dominion Museum. 8516.
2. Whirinaki river. *Okarewa pa*. Otago Museum.



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4. Locality unknown. Dominion Museum neg. 814 B.
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1. Hawkes Bay district. Dominion Museum neg. 376.
2. Poverty Bay. National Museum of Ireland.
3. Banks Peninsula. Canterbury Museum.



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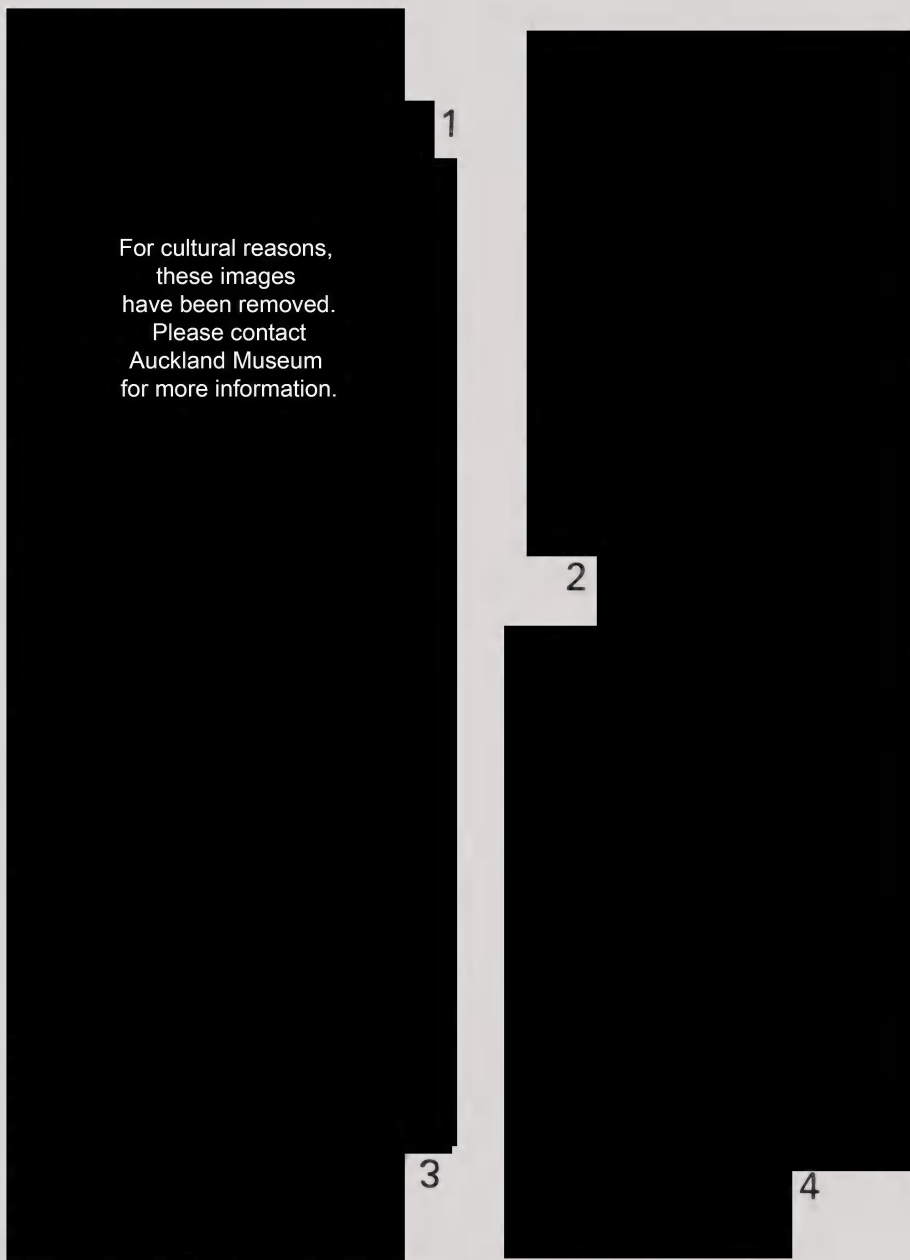


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4. Manutuke. Turanga House in Dominion Museum.
5. Banks Peninsula, Canterbury Museum.
6. Manutuke: house Turanganui a Kiwa.



1. N.W. Lake Taupo. Dominion Museum.
2. East Cape district (A. Hamilton). Dominion Museum. neg. 7311.
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7. Hawkes Bay. Dominion Museum 287.
8. East Cape district (A. Hamilton). Dominion Museum neg. 380.



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1. Locality unknown. Bernice P. Bishop Museum 1413.
2. Locality unknown. Dominion Museum 1991.
3. Wellington district. Auckland Museum 18426.2.
4. Locality unknown, now on *pataka* Te Oha. Auckland Museum.

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5. Rotorua. Dominion Museum 2.1257.
6. Mayor Island. Auckland Museum 9900.
7. Locality unknown. Auckland Museum 22752.
8. Lake Taupo. Auckland Museum 24418.

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- 1 Rotorua: house Rangitihi. Auckland Museum.
- 2 Locality unknown. Dominion Museum neg. 2.1267.
- 3 Te Kaha—*pataka*. Auckland Museum.
- 4 Te Kaha—*pataka*. Auckland Museum.

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